

5. A New look at Spike Butted AXE/ ADZ-AXES in Iran

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Abstract:

Spike butted axes which are attributed for the spike like projections at the back of their shaft tubes entered Iran via central Zagros region from western origins and Elamite culture as well. Based on available evidences these axes, apparently, evolved from relatively simple practical examples to highly stylized decorative or ceremonial axes. According to inscribed and limited stratified examples this process started since late 13th century B.C., and reached its extreme level in 700 B.C. (Iron Age III), during which various examples in different forms have been produced in Iran. Distinct form of their blades and shaft tubes along with their spikes demonstrate five major variant types among them. This topological study indicates that although their main manufacturing center in Iran was Luristan and Elam at their very first appearance in the Iranian plateau, in following years each type and form seem to be a distinct regional and even chronological evolutionary form of spike butted axes of simple practical examples to their highly decorated ceremonial variants. Each region in the Western half of the Iranian plateau has its own specific variant form and decoration during different periods.

Keywords: spike butted axe; morphological changes; region; chronology; evolution; western Iran.